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The Origin of Unamuno's *Mist*: Unamuno's Copy of Kierkegaard's *Diary of the Seducer*

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NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

The Origin of Unamuno's *Mist*: Unamuno's Copy of Kierkegaard's *Diary of the Seducer*

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Miguel de Unamuno's *Niebla* (Mist) is one of the greatest novels ever written in the Spanish language. Furthermore, Edward Friedman regards it, with *Don Quixote* and *Lazarillo de Tormes*, as one of the three outstanding Spanish "theories of the novel," or novels wherein their authors successfully delineate their own paradigm of the genre.¹ Although it was first published in 1914, it is very likely that Unamuno had produced the final draft by 1907.² The novel was soon translated into eleven European languages

I am indebted to Kristin F. Hagemann for her help in translating the Danish texts and to Emma L. Knight, who attentively and generously read a draft of this essay.

1. Edward H. Friedman, *Cervantes in the Middle: Realism and Reality in the Spanish Novel from "Lazarillo de Tormes" to "Niebla"* (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2006), 22.

2. I have summarized the plot of *Mist* elsewhere: "*Mist* tells the love story of Augusto Pérez, a young graduate in law whose fortune allows him to live a life of leisure. His father's death, when he was a child, prompted his mother to pamper Augusto and to make him emotionally dependent on her, even after her death. The story begins one morning when Augusto leaves his home and notices a beautiful girl. Fascinated by her beauty, he follows her, hoping to find out where she lives. Augusto realizes he has fallen in love and decides to court her. The young lady is Eugenia Domingo del Arco, a piano teacher who lives with her aunt and uncle. Although Eugenia is infatuated with a lower-class hopeless man called Mauricio, Augusto determines to win her love and befriends Eugenia's aunt, who vows to help him. The novel includes some interesting dialogues between Eugenia and her aunt, where the latter advocates the social function of matrimony whereas the young girl persists in not marrying the man she does not love. However, realising that the major obstacle in her way to marrying the idle Mauricio is his own inability to find a job, Eugenia accepts Augusto's matrimonial proposal and urges him to find Mauricio a good job in another city in order to keep the ex-boyfriend away from them. When Mauricio leaves town to take up his position, Eugenia accompanies him leaving a cruel letter for Augusto. Lost in desperation, Augusto decides to kill himself. He then recalls reading an article on suicide by an eminent scholar named Miguel de Unamuno, and travels to Salamanca to visit Unamuno and discuss his case. In their interview, Unamuno reveals to Augusto that Augusto is only a fictional character who cannot decide his fate. Unamuno declares himself the author of the novel and affirms that he has already decided that Augusto will not commit suicide. Their dialogue grows more and more intense before finishing with the author's declaration that he will kill his

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and today is regarded as a paradigmatic text in the history of the Spanish novel. The immense value of this novel in the history of European literature has regrettably been overlooked.³ *Mist* introduced a number of narrative techniques that would subsequently become the trademark of other authors: it precedes the work of Dorothy Richardson, Marcel Proust, and James Joyce in the use of stream of consciousness, and it includes a lengthy and dramatic interview between the main character and Unamuno the author, predating Pirandello's similar interplay between reality and fiction. Not without reason, Theodore Ziolkowski has described *Mist* as "a monument of the philosophical novel and a chef d'oeuvre of modern experimental fiction."⁴

In addition to its narratological innovations and stylistic excellence, the extreme complexity of *Mist* lies in its philosophical depth and intertextual reach. It deserves to be categorized as an existentialist novel, which, having been drafted in 1907, long precedes Sartre, Camus, and the main works by Rilke, Kafka, and Pirandello.⁵ In 1913 Unamuno published *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida* (On the tragic sense of life), his best-known philosophical treatise, which elaborates certain concepts that are essential to understanding the profundity of *Mist*. Because Unamuno was an avid reader, his oeuvre displays extensive erudition. *Mist* is perhaps his most intertextual novel—it bears traces of works by Cervantes, Benito Pérez Galdós, Leopoldo Alas, Ángel Ganivet, Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Bernard Shaw, and Søren Kierkegaard.⁶

character. On his arrival home, Augusto eats excessively and goes to sleep. He is later found dead in his bed. The cause of his death is left open to speculation—was it really a suicide or did he die because the author had decided so?" (J. A. G. Ardila, "Niebla [Mist]," *The Literary Encyclopedia*, <http://www.litencyc.com/php/sworcs.php?rec=true&UID=11367>).

3. The seminal volume edited by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature, 1890–1930* (London: Penguin, 1991), mentions *Niebla* only in the biographical note on Unamuno in the section "Brief Biographies," 638.

4. Theodore Ziolkowski, foreword to *Mist*, by Miguel de Unamuno (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), xvii.

5. See J. A. G. Ardila, "Nueva lectura de *Niebla*: Kierkegaard y el amor," *Revista de Literatura* 70 (2008): 85–118.

6. On Cervantes, see, e.g., Bénédicte Vauthier, "*Niebla*" de Miguel de Unamuno: A favor de Cervantes, en contra de los "cervantófilos"; *Estudio de narratología estilística* (New York: Lang, 1999); J. A. G. Ardila, "Unamuno y Cervantes: Narradores y narración en *Niebla*," *Modern Languages Notes* 125 (2010): 348–68. On Galdós, see Ricardo Gullón, *Técnicas de Galdós* (Madrid: Taurus, 1970), 57–102. On Alas, see Thomas Franz, "*Niebla* y Su único hijo," *Cuadernos de la Cátedra Miguel de Unamuno* 36 (2001): 81–92. On Ganivet, see Thomas Franz, "*Niebla* y Los trabajos del infatigable creador Pío Cid," *Cuadernos de la Cátedra Miguel de Unamuno* 40 (2005): 31–44. On Bécquer, see J. A. G. Ardila, "Mujer, feminismo y literatura en *Niebla*," in *Miguel de Unamuno: Estudios sobre su obra*, ed. Ana Chaguaceda Toledano, 4 vols. to date (Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2003–), vol. 6 (forthcoming, 2012). On Shaw, see Thomas Franz, "*Niebla*" inexplorada: Midiendo intersticios en el maravilloso texto de Unamuno (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2003), 137–66.

Kierkegaard's *Forførelers dagbog* (The diary of the seducer)⁷ (1843) has been singled out as the intertext exerting the strongest and deepest influence on *Mist*. In 1964, Ruth Webber pointed out that “numerous motifs and images [are] common to both works.”⁸ Subsequent research has confirmed this.⁹ Although Webber's thesis that Kierkegaard influenced the narrative structure of *Mist* was proved wrong, recent publications have focused on other similarities, noting particularly how Unamuno's main character experiences the Kierkegaardian stages in life—aesthetic, ethic, and moral.¹⁰ The analogies between the *Diary of the Seducer* and *Mist* include:

- 1) the wording of the titles;¹¹
- 2) the extensive use of the monologue;
- 3) similar main characters—Johannes (in Kierkegaard) and Augusto (in Unamuno) are seducers who fall in love with a lady at first sight, befriend the lady's aunt, are obsessed with the aesthetics of beauty, ruminate endlessly about life (showing irrational thinking), and believe that all women are beautiful;
- 4) similar “lady” characters—Cordelia (in Kierkegaard) and Eugenia (in Unamuno) are orphans who live with their aunts, play the piano, and have a boyfriend;
- 5) some stylistic choices, including the use of the possessive adjective *my* when the seducer calls his lady's name;
- 6) a number of parallel situations, including the passages when the seducer first notices the lady in the street, and the reflections, early in

7. Although the title has often been translated into English as the *Diary of a Seducer*, the translation calls for the definite article *the* before “seducer.”

8. Ruth House Webber, “Kierkegaard and the Elaboration of Unamuno's *Niebla*,” *Hispanic Review* 32 (1964): 123.

9. In addition to the studies cited subsequently in this essay, see Gonzalo Corona Marzol, “Unamuno y Kierkegaard: La mujer y el amor en *Niebla*,” in *Actas del IX simposio de la Sociedad Española de Literatura General y Comparada*, vol. 1, *La mujer: Elogio y vituperio*, ed. Túa Blesa (Universidad de Zaragoza, 1994), 103–14; Carmine Luigi Ferraro, “La moral de elección kierkegaardiana en *Niebla* de Miguel de Unamuno,” in Toledano, *Miguel de Unamuno: Estudios sobre su obra*, 1:125–32.

10. On narrative structure, see Ardila, “Unamuno y Cervantes.” On Kierkegaard and Unamuno, see, e.g., Jan E. Evans and C. Stephen Evans, “Kierkegaard's Aesthete and Unamuno's *Niebla*,” *Philosophy and Literature* 28 (2004): 342–52; Jan E. Evans, *Unamuno and Kierkegaard: Paths to Selfhood in Fiction* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2005); Gemma Roberts, *Unamuno: Afinidades y coincidencias kierkegaardianas* (Boulder, CO: Society of Spanish and Spanish-American Studies, 1986).

11. The *Diary of the Seducer* is included in *Enten-Eller*, whose full title is *Enten-Eller: Et livs-fragment; Udgivet af Victor Eremita* (Either/Or: A fragment of life; Edited by Victor Eremita). The full title of *Mist* is *Niebla: Nivola; Prólogo de Víctor Goti* (Mist: A nivola; With a prologue by Víctor Goti).

- the novels, on the beauty of a lady's foot (in Kierkegaard) and the beauty of an umbrella (in Unamuno);
- 7) a comic tone that intermingles with a profound sense of tragedy;
 - 8) references to life as an experience of being or feeling lost in the mist—*mist* being a metaphor for the world;
 - 9) the thesis that love alone — *kjærlighed*, or “spiritual love,” rather than *elskov*, or “physical love”—can help men out of the mist of life.¹²

The sheer number of striking similarities makes it very unlikely they are mere coincidences. In this essay, I will prove that Unamuno read Kierkegaard's novel carefully and that he noticed in it salient elements that he subsequently developed in *Mist*, including the metaphorical term *niebla* (mist). The evidence comes from Unamuno's handwritten annotations in the margins of his private copy of the *Diary of the Seducer*, extant in the Unamuno Museum of the University of Salamanca, where Unamuno served both as professor of Greek and linguistics and as president.

Unamuno owned a rich collection of Danish books.¹³ Webber pointed out that he owned an Italian translation of the *Diary of the Seducer*, published in 1910.¹⁴ Considering that Unamuno finished *Mist* in 1907, the Italian book is inconsequential. Moreover, this volume lacks any annotations, which Unamuno always made in the books he read. Yet Unamuno read Danish. In a letter to the Spanish novelist and critic Leopoldo Alas (known as Clarín) in 1900, Unamuno declared he intended to read Kierkegaard in Danish.¹⁵ During Unamuno's exile in Paris in the 1920s, a Danish journalist addressed him in German, and Unamuno replied in Danish, “I learnt your language in Salamanca, reading Kierkegaard.”¹⁶

As Jan Evans has pointed out, “That Unamuno read Kierkegaard is indisputable.”¹⁷ Unamuno bought Kierkegaard's *Collected Works*, published in fourteen volumes from 1901 to 1906 by Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag in Copenhagen, under the title *Søren Kierkegaards samlede værker, udgivne af A. B. Drachmann, J. L. Heiberg og H. O. Lange* (Søren Kierkegaard's collected works, edited by A. B. Drachmann, J. L. Heiberg and H. O. Lange). All fourteen volumes are kept in the archives of the Unamuno Museum. It

12. Compare Ardila, “Nueva lectura de *Niebla*.”

13. See Rafael Chabrán, “Miguel de Unamuno y su biblioteca danesa,” *Revista de Hispanismo Filosófico* 14 (2009): 141–54.

14. Søren Kierkegaard, *Il diario del seduttore*, trans. Luigi Radaelli (Turin: Bocca, 1910), referred to in Webber, “Kierkegaard and the Elaboration of Unamuno's *Niebla*,” 124.

15. See Antonio Sánchez-Barbudo, “Una experiencia decisiva: La crisis de 1897,” in *Miguel de Unamuno*, ed. Antonio Sánchez-Barbudo (Madrid: Taurus, 1990), 113.

16. Miguel de Unamuno, quoted in Emilio Salcedo, *Vida de don Miguel* (Salamanca: Anaya, 1964), 274.

17. Jan E. Evans, “Unamuno and Kierkegaard: Clarifying the Relationship,” *Revista Hispánica Moderna* 56 (2003): 297.

has been suggested that Unamuno bought each of the volumes as it was published.¹⁸ In any case, by 1906, he had access to Kierkegaard's works.¹⁹ Indeed, in 1907 he published an article titled "Ibsen y Kierkegaard," where he mentions Kierkegaard's *Enten-Eller* (Either/Or), the book containing the *Diary of the Seducer*.²⁰

The first volume of Kierkegaard's *Collected Works* was published in 1901; it includes the eight pieces that make up *Either/Or*. The *Diary of the Seducer* (273–412) is the last work in volume 1. As mentioned above, Unamuno would always write marginal notes in the books he read. The number of annotations in the *Diary of the Seducer* shows that he examined this work with particular zeal. These notes occupy the margins and the blank page after the last page of the novel. For my analytical purposes they may be divided into two categories: (1) translations of Danish words, and (2) brief responses to passages (sometimes as brief as one word).

In the margins of the text, Unamuno translated Danish words that he marked in the text; some of these translations are in Spanish, some in German. These are words he glossed after looking up their meanings. In several instances, a page contains no more than two or three of these annotations. For example, on the first page of the text Unamuno translated *dølge* as "ocultar, callar," and *bebreidende* as "vorwerfen, verweisen." The highest number of glossed Danish words is on page 275: *besmykke*: colorear, paliar; *Adfærd*: conducta; *trukken ud*: abierto; *Skjødsløshed*: descuido, negligencia; *rænkefulde*: artificioso; *Underfundighed*: astucia. These glosses provide evidence that Unamuno could read Danish fluently, doubtless aided by his advanced knowledge of English and German, cognate languages of Danish.

The annotations in Unamuno's copy of the *Diary of the Seducer* offer a record of his interest in particular ideas and themes (page numbers of passages that caught his attention are noted inside the back cover of the book: 298, 301, 307, 310, 330, 333, 396, 362, 366, 368, 373, 383, and 397), and Unamuno always highlighted and measured the interest of the passages he was reading by underlining them or drawing a vertical line in the margin. It seems likely that an underline (or a vertical line in the margin) meant that

18. See Mario J. Valdés, *An Unamuno Source Book* (University of Toronto Press, 1973), xx n. 7.

19. Roberta Johnson believes that Unamuno read Kierkegaard as early as 1901: "Most importantly Kierkegaard's personalist philosophy, which Unamuno began reading in 1901 and continued to devour through 1906 as new volumes became available, provided him with a substitute for the rationalism and positivism he had discarded" (*Crossfire: Philosophy and the Novel in Spain, 1900–1934* [Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993], 93).

20. Miguel de Unamuno, "Ibsen y Kierkegaard," reprinted in *Mi religión y otros ensayos breves* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1964), 51. Unamuno mentions the title of *Enten-Eller* in Spanish (*O lo uno o lo otro*); however, there were no Spanish translations of *Enten-Eller*, and for this reason it is obvious that Unamuno had read the Danish text in the volume he kept in his private library.

the passage was worthy of note; a double underline meant it was more relevant; and a triple underline meant it was more interesting still: here, Unamuno underlined the page numbers 301 and 362, double-underlined 307, and triple-underlined 363 and 373. These glosses are of the utmost importance to a critical understanding of *Mist*, since they point to details and motives that Unamuno would echo in his novel. Alongside four of these page numbers, Unamuno wrote comments:

- 298 Condenado azar!
 301 El haya y el primo
 307 Qué henchidos de salud sus labios!
 397 La mujer es el sueño del hombre
- [298 Damned luck!
 301 The aunt and the cousin
 307 How full of health her lips are!
 397 Women are the dream of men]²¹

The expression “Damned luck!” becomes comic since it is uttered when the seducer’s plans go wrong, creating an amusing situation. This expression is an example of the tragicomic tone that is common to both Kierkegaard’s and Unamuno’s novels.²²

“The aunt and the cousin” refers to two characters in Kierkegaard’s novel whose counterparts in *Mist* are doña Ermelinda and Eugenia. As in the *Diary of the Seducer*, in *Mist* the girl’s parents have died and she lives with an aunt, whom the male protagonist befriends. In both novels, the girl has the freedom of an orphan whose behavior is not restricted by parental authority. This annotation suggests that Unamuno modeled the characters Eugenia and her aunt after Cordelia and her aunt.

“How full of health her lips are!” is double-underlined. In the *Diary of the Seducer*, this is one of the first allusions to the lady’s physical features. In *Mist*, references to Eugenia’s physique are almost exclusively concerned with her eyes. Despite this difference, the gloss indicates Unamuno’s intention to emphasize the lady’s most remarkable attributes.

“Women are the dream of men” epitomizes the themes of women, love, and dreams in *Mist*. For Unamuno, love (and hence women) can clear away the mist of life, but this love must be spiritual, not physical. There is also in *Mist* a recurrent tendency to intermingle life and dreams. Although this thread may be traced back to the Spanish seventeenth-century play *La vida es sueño* (Life is a dream) by Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño* lacks the love theme of the *Diary of the Seducer*. Unlike Calderón’s play but

21. All translations are mine, with the help of Kristin F. Hagemann.

22. On comedy and tragedy in the *Diary of the Seducer* and *Mist*, see Ardila, “Nueva lectura de *Niebla*.”

like Kierkegaard's novel, *Mist* depicts the real world from an oneiric perspective. According to Unamuno, the real world in which we live is misty. The idealistic illusions reveal themselves with a particular strength in dreams, and therefore the oneiric perception mirrors the hope for the happiness and fulfilment that will cause the mist to fade away. This can be achieved only through spiritual love. Until one attains spiritual love, reality is merely a dream. In both the *Diary of the Seducer* and *Mist* no realization of spiritual love is accomplished, hence leaving the tragic suggestion that life is bound to be misty.

In addition to these four annotations, the margins of Unamuno's copy of the *Diary of the Seducer* contain further and much stronger evidence of Kierkegaard's influence. There are four notes in the margins of the *Diary of the Seducer* that strongly suggest that the main idea for *Mist* was drawn from Kierkegaard's novel. One of these notes is on page 312, next to this passage:

Cordelia! Det er dog et herligt Navn. Jeg sidder hjeme og øver mig selv i at tale ligesom en Papegøie, jeg siger: Cordelia, Cordelia, min Cordelia, Du min Cordelia.

[Cordelia! What a delightful name. I am at home, trying to talk like a parrot, and I say: Cordelia, Cordelia, my Cordelia, you my Cordelia.]

Here Unamuno writes: "momento del tú, tuteo?" (the moment of *tú*, *tuteo*?). In Peninsular Spanish, *tú* is the term of address used in familiar situations, and *tuteo* means the usage of *tú* instead of the formal *usted*. When *Mist* was written, in early twentieth-century Spain, the formal term of address *usted* was used in most situational contexts, whereas *tú* was restricted to very familiar situations. In some Spanish regions, such as Castile, *usted* was still used by children to address their parents in the 1960s and 1970s. In the *Diary of the Seducer*, the "moment of *tú*" happens when Johannes first addresses Cordelia (in absentia) with *du* instead of *De*. Also in *Mist*, Unamuno emphasizes the moment when Augusto changes the term of address: "Pero ¿es que cree usted, es que crees [tú], Eugenia, que no estoy de veras enamorado de ti?" which translates, using archaic English terms of address, as "But, do you think, dost thou think, Eugenia, I am not actually in love with thee?"²³ Both novels have this in common, although the moment of the change from *usted* to *tú* is a staple in Spanish literature for the advance of any romantic relationship.

The three other annotations are the most remarkable: in the margins Unamuno wrote the word *nube* (cloud) once and *niebla* (mist) twice (he wrote just the Spanish words without adding the Danish). Furthermore, *niebla* is the only word that Unamuno added to the margins twice, and in

23. Miguel de Unamuno, *Niebla* (1914; repr., Madrid: Cátedra, 2005), 161.

the space of ten pages. Had he not known the word *taage* (mist),²⁴ he would have learned it the first time it appeared and would not have glossed it a second time just ten pages later. Furthermore, he translated the word *taage* in the second sentence of his copy of Ibsen's *Brand*, which he had read before.²⁵ For these reasons, it is clear that Unamuno's interest in *taage* was not semantic but thematic.

On page 302, Unamuno writes *nube* next to this passage:

Stien og Bygningerne paa den anden Side belystes af afmægtige Solstraaler. Himlen var klar o reen, kun en enkelt let Sky gled ubemærket hen over den, bedst at bemærke, naar man fæstede Øiet paa Søen, over hvis blanke Pande den forsvandt.

[The path and the buildings on the other side were illuminated by the beams of the weak sun. The sky was calm and pure; only a weightless cloud slipped away; it was more noticeable when one looked at the sea, over its bright surface it vanished.]

Unamuno may have noticed the cloud as a metaphor for life, which slips away quietly until it vanishes.

The most intriguing annotations are on pages 281 and 292, glosses that are evidence of Unamuno's interest in clouds and mist as metaphors. Here, Unamuno writes *niebla* in the margins next to these two passages:

Ogsaa jeg er reven med ind i de Taage-Rige, i den Drømme-Verden, hvor man hvert Øieblik bliver ræd for sin egen Skygge. (281)

[I too feel drawn into that kingdom of mist, into that world of dreams, where one constantly fears his own shadow.]

Min skønne Ubekjendte! gid Deres Tilkommende i alle Maader maa være ligesaa punktlig som jeg, eller ønsker De maaskee snarere, at han aldrig maa komme et Qvarteer for tidlig, som De vil, jeg er i alle Maader til Tjeneste. . . . "Fortryllende Troldqvinde, Fee eller Hex, lad Din Taage Forsvinde," aabenbar Dig, Du er formodentlig allerede tilstede, men usynlig for mig, forraad Dig, thi ellers tør jeg vel ikke venter en Aabenbarelse. (292)

24. *Taage* is spelled *tåge* in contemporary Danish.

25. Unamuno had a copy of Henrik Ibsen's *Brand* (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1898). The word *Taage* appears in the second sentence of *Brand*, which begins with the following stage directions: "Oppe i sneen på fjedvidderne. Tågen ligger tæt og tung; det er regnvej og halvmørkt" (Up in the snow, on the mountains. The mist is thick and close; it is raining, and half dark). Next to *Tågen* (the mist), Unamuno wrote *niebla*. Because the number of words translated by Unamuno in *Brand* is much higher than in Kierkegaard's *Diary of the Seducer*, and similar to the number in his copy of Georg Brandes's *Henrik Ibsen* (1898), which Unamuno read before 1900, it is clear that he knew the word *taage* by the time he read Kierkegaard.

[My pretty unknown girl! I wish that your boyfriend should be as punctual as I am; or do you perhaps wish that he never be early by a quarter of an hour. As you wish, but I am completely available. . . . "Charming wizard, fairy or witch, let your mist disappear," reveal yourself. Perhaps you are already present, but you are invisible to me; betray yourself, otherwise I will not be able to wait for a revelation.]

The first of these two passages is in the introduction by the intratextual editor. This passage is essential to understanding the state of mind and the feelings of the main character in the *Diary of the Seducer* and also of Augusto in *Mist*. This is a crucial moment in the Danish novel, where the world is described as a *Taaqe-Rige*, or "kingdom of mist," and existence as a *Drømme-Verden*, or "world of dreams." These are precisely the two central ideas in Unamuno's *Mist*—that life is mist and that (day) dreaming provides a temporary alternative until happiness is secured by means of true spiritual love. The fact that these concepts are mentioned at the very beginning of the *Diary of the Seducer* indicates that Unamuno noticed them early in his reading and that they could have conditioned his perception of this novel. Indeed, this sentence from the *Diary of the Seducer* summarizes perfectly the philosophical problem raised in *Mist*: "Esas penas y esas alegrías vienen embozadas en una inmensa niebla de pequeños incidentes. Y la vida es esto, la niebla" (Sadness and happiness are both enfolded by an immense mist of small events. And this is what life is, the mist).²⁶ Both Johannes and Augusto understand that life is enfolded in mist.²⁷ Although seemingly irrelevant, the second of these marginal notes (on 292, where Unamuno annotates *niebla* a second time) confirms the profound effect on Unamuno of Kierkegaard's use of the kingdom of mist as a metaphor for life.

Critics have noticed the many parallels between the *Diary of the Seducer* and *Mist*. These analogies are so plentiful as to leave little room for doubt that the Spanish novel was influenced by Kierkegaard. Unamuno's annotations in his personal Danish copy of the *Diary of the Seducer* attest to his close reading of this novel. Most important, however, the word *niebla*—glossing the passage where life is described as the kingdom of mist—proves that Unamuno drew the very idea of *Mist* from the *Diary of the Seducer*. The marginalia provide evidence not only of Unamuno's borrowing from Kierkegaard's novel but also of the fact that in the Danish novel he found the central idea for and the inspiration to write *Mist*.²⁸

26. Unamuno, *Niebla*, 115.

27. This point was made before in Roberts, *Unamuno: Afinidades y coincidencias kierkegaardianas*, 31.

28. The core idea is that love alone can clear the mist in life, as pointed out by Donald L. Shaw in *The Generation of 1898 in Spain* (London: Benn, 1975), 50, and fully explained in Ardila, "Nueva lectura de *Niebla*."